

DEPARTMENT PHILOSOPHY

Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) is a federal program that helps refugees become self-sufficient after their arrival in the U.S.

RCA is a cash program for refugees who are not eligible for FIP.

DEPARTMENT POLICY

RCA

Group composition is the determination of which individuals living together are included in the eligibility determination group (EDG) and certified group (CG). Spouses are responsible for each other. Needy spouses living together are expected to share income, assets, and expenses.

To be considered for RCA all of the following must apply:

- An individual must be a refugee as defined in the REFUGEES section in BEM 630 or 225A.
- The months for which eligibility is being determined must be within the RCA eligibility period as defined in BEM 630 and BEM 225A.
- When there is potential FIP eligibility, the group must take all actions available to obtain FIP. Failure to do so results in group RCA ineligibility.

DEFINITIONS

Adult

An individual is considered an **adult** for RCA when the individual is 18 years of age or older or has been legally emancipated.

Exception: An individual who meets the definition of a dependent child is **not** considered an adult for RCA eligibility purposes; see BEM 210.

Certified Group

The RCA certified group means those individuals in the RCA EDG who meet all non-financial eligibility factors. Countable income and assets of CG members are always considered in determining eligi-

bility. CG members have a RCA EDG participation status of eligible adult.

Note: The RCA payment standard is based on the CG size.

EDG Participation Status

The RCA EDG participation status explains the role the individual plays in the RCA eligibility determination. The countable income and assets of individuals having an eligible or disqualified RCA EDG participation status are considered in determining RCA eligibility.

Eligibility Determination Group

The RCA EDG means those individuals living together whose information is needed to determine eligibility for RCA.

Note: Individuals with an EDG participation status of disqualified adult remain in the RCA EDG. Disqualified individuals must meet all program requirements. Bridges considers their income and assets.

Emancipated

An individual under the age of 18 is **emancipated** if any of the following apply:

- Ever validly married.
- Emancipated by court order.
- On active duty with the armed forces of the United States.

Living Together

Living together means sharing a home, where individuals usually sleep, except for temporary absences.

Refugee

A refugee is an individual who meets the criteria under the **REFUGEES** section in BEM 630 or BEM 225A.

Temporary Absence

A temporarily absent individual is considered to be living in the home when **all** of the following are true:

- Individual's location is known.
- There is a definite plan to return.
- The absence has lasted or is expected to last 30 days or less.
- The individual lived with the RCA EDG before the absence.

Exception: An individual is considered living in the home, even after 30 days, when absence is due to any of the following:

- In-patient hospitalization (including a psychiatric hospital).
- Absence for training or education.
- Absence due solely to active duty in the armed forces of the U.S.

GROUP COMPOSITION

RCA

Based on data entered in the system, Bridges determines all of the following:

- Each household member's RCA EDG participation status.
- Which individuals' income and assets are considered.
- Which individuals needs are considered.
- Which individuals relationship(s) to other members are considered.

These determinations are made based on the individual's:

- Age.
- Relationship(s) to other household members.
- Receipt of other program benefits such as SSI or Refugee Matching Grant payments.

Mandatory RCA EDG Members

RCA

The following individuals who live together are mandatory RCA EDG members:

- The individual.
- The individual's spouse who lives with the individual.

Exception: A special living arrangement (SLA) resident's spouse has an EDG participation status of excluded even if they would otherwise live together; see BEM 616 for SLA policy.

**Excluded RCA
EDG Members**

The following individuals have an EDG participation status of other adult. They have no effect on the eligibility determination:

- SSI Recipients.
- Refugee matching grant recipients.

Refusal of a RCA EDG member to provide information needed to determine eligibility causes group ineligibility.

LEGAL BASE**RCA**

45 CFR 400

P.L. 106-386 of 2000, Section 107